

REMARKS

Claim 1 was amended, and claims 1-9 are currently pending. In light of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections and advancement of this application to issue.

Applicants thank Examiner Lee for the courtesy of a telephone interview on March 30, 2006, requested by the undersigned to discuss the rejection of the current claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103. During the interview, Applicants asserted that U.S. Patent No. 6,393,126 ("*van der Kaay*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,334,975 ("*Wachob*") at least does not teach or suggest time being transmitted to an endpoint transceiver over a power distribution line including at least one transformer that steps down a power signal from a first voltage to a second voltage. The Examiner stated that further searching would be necessary to determine whether the claim amendments proposed during the interview would lead to allowable subject matter. No agreement was made regarding patentability of the claims.

I. **Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

In the Final Office Action dated December 2, 2005, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *van der Kaay* in view of *Wachob*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify its originally intended scope and to place it in better form for consideration. The amendment does not add new matter and does not narrow the claimed subject matter.

Claim 1 recites, “the time being transmitted to the endpoint transceiver over the power distribution line including at least one transformer that steps down a power signal from a first voltage to a second voltage.” In contrast, and as admitted by the Examiner, *van der Kaay* does not teach or suggest that the distribution of the retrieved time is done via the claimed power distribution line as a communication medium. (See Office Action, page 2, lines 18-19.) Consequently, *van der Kaay* does not teach or suggest the aforementioned recitation.

Wachob does not overcome *van der Kaay*'s deficiencies. *Wachob* merely discloses that a time reference is received by a CATV converter, then encoded and modulated for transmission on a residential AC wiring system that carries AC power to appliances in a house. (See Abstract, lines 7-11.) *Wachob*, however, does not disclose or suggest a power distribution line connected to a high voltage power system. Rather, *Wachob* teaches away from a power distribution line connected to a high voltage power system. For example, if *Wachob*'s residential AC wiring system were operated at a high voltage level associated with a high voltage power system, the appliances in the house would be damaged by the high voltage. This high voltage would render *Wachob*'s system inoperable. Accordingly, like *van der Kaay*, *Wachob* does not teach or suggest transmitting or retrieving time via power distribution line connected to a high voltage power system.

Moreover, *Wachob* does not teach or suggest transmitting the time to the endpoint transceiver over a power distribution line including at least one transformer that steps down a high voltage level from the power distribution line to a low voltage level that is useful at the customer premises. Rather, *Wachob* merely discloses a CATV

system (see Abstract, lines 7-11), not a power distribution line including a step-down transformer. Neither the CATA system nor the AC wiring system in *Wachob* discloses a transformer that steps down a high voltage level from a power distribution line to a low voltage level that is useful at a customer premises. For example, the residential AC wiring system disclosed in *Wachob* that carries AC power to the appliances in the house does not include a transformer, much less a transformer that steps down a high voltage level from a power distribution line to a low voltage level that is useful at a customer premises.

Combining *van der Kaay* with *Wachob* do not lead to the claimed invention because *van der Kaay* and *Wachob*, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest “the time being transmitted to the endpoint transceiver over the power distribution line including at least one transformer that steps down a power signal from a first voltage to a second voltage,” as recited by Claim 1. Accordingly, independent Claim 1 is patentably distinct from the cited art, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1.

Dependent Claims 2-9 incorporate all of the elements of Claim 1 and are thus patentably distinct from the cited references for at least for the reasons described above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of dependent Claims 2-9.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicants note that there may be other reasons that the claims are patentably distinct from the cited references in addition to those raised herein and reserve the right to raise any such reason or related argument in the future.

Furthermore, the Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

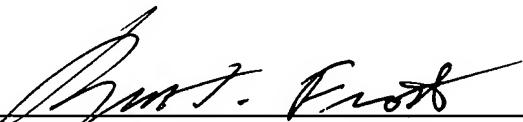
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 13-2725. Feel free to contact the undersigned attorney if there are any questions or if a telephone interview otherwise would be helpful in advancing this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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